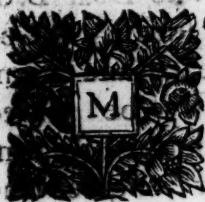




*To the most Reverend Fathers in
God, William Lord Archbishop
of Canterbury, Primate of all
England and Metropolitan, and
John Lord Archbishop of York
Primate of England and Metro-
politan.*

JAMES R.



Most Reverend Fathers in
God, We Greet you
well. Whereas the bold
abuses, and extrava-
gancies of Preachers in
the Pulpit, have not
only by the experience of former Ages
been found to tend to the Dishonour
of God, the Scandal of Religion, and
Disturbance of the Peace both of
Church and State, but did also (through
the Licentiousness of the late Rebelli-
ous times) much increase, to the Infla-

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ming, Fomenting, and Heightening of the sad Distempers and Confusions that were then among us : And whereas even at this present (notwithstanding the merciful Providence of God, so signally manifested in Restoring Our Royal Family, and the Lawful Government of these Realms, and putting an end to the great Rebellion, and notwithstanding the Pious care and endeavours of Our late Dear Brother, and Our Self ever since, to Govern Our Realms in Peace and Tranquility) it may justly be feared that in sundry parts of this Realm, there want not men of unquiet and Factious Spirits, who instead of Preaching the pure Word of God, and building up the People in Faith and Holiness, will (if they be not restrained) make it a great part of their Business to beget in the minds of their Hearers, an evil Opinion of their Governours, by insinuating Fears and Jealousies,

lies, to dispose them to Discontent, and to season them with such unsound and dangerous Principles as may lead them into Disobedience, Schism, and Rebellion : And whereas also sundry young Divines, and Preachers, either out of a Spirit of Contention and Contradiction, or in a vain ostentation of their Learning, take upon them in their Popular Sermons, to handle the deep Points of Gods Eternal Councils and Decrees, or to meddle with the Affairs of State and Government, or to wrangle about Forms and Gestures, and other fruitless Disputes and Controversies, serving rather to amuse than profit the Hearers ; which is done for the most part, and with the greatest Confidence, by such Persons as least understand them : We out of Our Princely Care and Zeal for the Honour of God, the Advancement of Piety, Peace, and true Religion, and for the Preventing for the future, as
much

much as lieth in Us, the many and great inconveniencies and mischiefs that will unavoidably ensue, if a timely stop be not given to these and the like growing Abuses; Do, according to the Examples of several of Our Predecessors of Blessed Memory, by these Our special Letters straitly Charge and Command you, to use your utmost Care and Diligence that these Directions, which upon long and serious Consideration, Our late Dear Brother thought good to give concerning Preachers, * and which We upon like Consideration have Approved and caused to be Reprinted, and herewith sent unto you, be from henceforth duly and strictly observed by all the Bishops and others concerned therein within your Provinces. And to this end Our Will and Pleasure is, That you forthwith send them Copies of these Our Directions, to be by them speedily Communicated to every Parson, Vicar, Curate,

* Anno 1662

(7)

Curate, Lecturer, and Preacher in every Cathedral, Collegiate, and Parish-Church within their several Diocesses : And that you earnestly Require them to **employ** their utmost endeavour for the due Observation of the same, whereof We shall expect a strict Account, both of you, and every one of them : And these Our Letters shall be your sufficient Warrant and Discharge in that behalf.

*Given at Our Court at Whitehall the
Fifth day of March 1685. In the Second Year of Our Reign.*

By His Majesties Command,

SUNDERLAND P.

I have been thinking of you very much lately, and wondering how you are getting on. I hope you are well and happy. I am still in the same old place, but I am getting on as well as I can. I am still in the same old place, but I am getting on as well as I can. I am still in the same old place, but I am getting on as well as I can.

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RECORDED

(91)

DIRECTIONS
Concerning
PREACHERS.

1.



That no Preachers in their Sermons presume to meddle with Matters of State, to Rebel new Governments, or take upon them to Declare, Limit, or Bound out the Power and Authority of Sovereign Princes, or to State and Determine the Differences betwixt Princes and the People: But that upon all good Occasions they faithfully Induce the People in their Bounden Duty of Subjection and Obedience to their Governours, Superiour and Subordinate of all sorts, and to the Established Laws according to the Word of God, and the Doctrine of the Church of England, as it is contained in the Homilies of

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Obedience, and the Articles of Religion set forth by Publick Authority.

II. That they be Admonished not to spend their Time, and Study in the Search of Abstruse and Speculative Notions, especially in and about the deep Points of Election and Reprobation, together with the Incomprehensible manner of the Concurrence of Gods free Grace, and Mans free Will, and such other Controversies as depend thereupon: But howsoever that they presume not Positively, and Doctrinally to Determine any thing concerning the same.

III. That they forbear in their Sermons ordinarily and causlessly to enter upon the handling of any other Controversies of less Moment and Difficulty: But whensoever they are occasioned by Invitation from the Text they Preach upon, or that in Regard of the Auditory they Preach unto, it may seem Requisite or Expedient so to do; That in such cases they do it with all Modesty, Gravity and Candour, Asserting the Doctrine and Discipline of the Church of England, from the Cavils and Objections of such as are Adversaries to either, without Bitterness, Railing, Jeering, or other unnecessary or unseemly Provocation.

IV. That for the more Edifying of the People in Faith and Godliness (the aforesaid abuses

last add) all Ministers and Preachers in their several respective Cures shall not onely diligently apply themselves to Catechise the Younger sort according as in the Book of Common Prayer is appointed; But also shall in their ordinary Sermons Insk chiefly upon Catechetical Doctrines (wherein are contained all the necessary and undoubted Verities of Christian Religion) Declaring withall unto their Congregations what Influences such Doctrines ought to have into their Lives and Conversations, and stirring them up to Actual O, as well by their Examples, as their Doctrines, to the Practice of such Religious and Royal Duties as are the proper Results of the said Doctrines, as Self-denial, Contempt of the World, Humility, Patience, Meekness, Temperance, Justice, Mercy, Obedience, and the like; And to a Detestation and Shunning of Sin, especially such Sins as are so rise among us, and common to the Age we Live in; such are those usually stiled the Seven Deadly ones, in short, all kind of Debauchery, Sensuality, Rebellion, Profaness, Atheism, and the like. And because the late Licentious Times have Corrupted Religion even in the very Roots and Foundations, That where there is an Afternoons Exercise, it be especially spent either in Explaining some part of the Church-Catechism, or in Preaching upon some such Part of Scripture, as will Properly and Naturally lead to the Handling of some thing Contained

In it, or may Conduce to the Erection of the Liturgy, and Prayers of the Church (as Declaration shall be offered) the one Cause They grew into Contempt amongst the People being this, that They were not Understood, That also the Minister as often as Convenient, if he can, Read the Prayers himself, and when he cannot to do, be Procure or Provide some fit Person in Holy Orders, who may do it with that Gravity, Dignity, Devotion, and Reverence as becomes so Holy an Action: And whensoever by Reason of his Infirmitie or the Concurrence of other Causes, the Time may seem too short, or he unable to Perform the Office of both Prayers and Sermon at length, he rather shorten his Discourse or Sermon, then omit any thing of the Prayers, lest he Incur the Penalty of the Act for Uniformity, Requiring them to be Read according as the Book Directs.

V. And further Our said and Pleasure is, That all Ministers within their severall Cures, be enjoined publickly to read over unto the People, such Canons as are or shall be in force, at least once, and the Thirty nine Articles twice every year, to the end they may the better understand, and be more thoroughly acquainted with the Doctrine and Discipline of the Church of England, and not so easily drawn away from it as formerly they have been.

VI. Since

VI. Since Preaching was not Anciently the work of every Priest, but was committed to the choicest Persons for Gravity, Piety and Learning; the Archbishops and Bishops of this Kingdom are to take great care upon their Licence to Preach, and that all Grants and Licences of this kind heretofore made by any Chancellor, Official, Commissary, or other Ecclesiastical Person (who are presumed not to be so Competent Judges in matters of this nature) be accounted void and Null, unless the same shall likewise be allowed by the Archbishop or the Bishop of the Diocese, and that all Licences of Preachers hereafter to be made or Granted by any Archbishop or Bishop, shall be only during Pleasure, otherwise to be void to all intents and purposes as if the same had never been made nor Granted.

VII. Lastly that for the better observing of the Lords-Day too much neglected of late, they shall, as by often and serious Admonitions and sharp Reproofs, endeavour to draw off People from such Idle, Debauched and Profane courses as dishonour God, bring a Scandal on Religion, and Contempt on the Laws and Authority Ecclesiastical and Civil, so shall they very earnestly perswade them to frequent Divine Service on the Lords-Day, and other Festivals appointed by the Church to be kept Solemn; And in case any Person shall resort unto any Taverns or Ale-houses, or use any unlawful Sports and Exercises on such

Such days, the Minister shall Exhort those which are in Authority in these several Parishes and Congregations, carefully to look after all such Offenders in any kind whatsoever, together with all those that Abett, Receive, or Entertain them, that they may be proceeded against according to the Laws, and quality of their Offences, that all such Disorders may for the time to come be prevented,

Given at Our Court at *Whitehall*, the Fifth Day of *March*, 1685. In the Second Year of Our Reign.

By His Majesties Command.

Sunderland. P.

L O N D O N,

Printed by *Charles Bill*, *Henry Hills*, and
Thomas Newcomb, Printers to the
 Kings most Excellent Majesty. 1685,

